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General Comment

[Edited by Gilbert Campbell Scoggin, The University of Missouri.]

Professor Guy Vowles, of the department of Latin at Fargo College, North Dakota, is the editor of Björnson's *En Glad Gut*. The volume has already been adopted as a textbook in several colleges.

Sir William Ramsay has recently given the course of Gifford Lectures at the University of Edinburgh, taking for his subject, "The Development of Religious Thought and Rites in the Borderland between Greece and the East."

Professor Louis E. Lord, of Oberlin College, contributed a letter to the *Nation* for August 3, dealing with "The Carnegie Foundation." He assembles in concise form some very telling objections against President Pritchett's proposed insurance scheme; and one wonders just what course of action could now reinstate the Foundation in the public confidence. Most, if not all, teachers will be inclined to say with Professor Cattell: "It is desirable at least to watch the Greeks, both when they bear gifts and when they take them away."

An encyclopedic *Mythology of All Races*, under the general editorship of Dr. Louis H. Gray, is to be published by the Marshall Jones Company of Boston. The series when completed will consist of thirteen volumes, including the index volume, each the work of specialists in their particular fields. The volume dealing with Greek and Roman mythology, written by Professor William Sherwood Fox of Princeton, has already appeared. The sixth volume will be devoted to Indian and Iranian mythology and will be the work of one of the most able of the younger Sanskritists, Professor Arthur Berriedale Keith, of the University of Edinburgh.

In the *Romanic Review* for January-March, 1916, C. Ruutz-Rees writes divertingly on "Sixteenth Century Schoolmasters at Grenoble and Their Delectable Vicissitudes." We follow the trials and tribulations of Maître Jacques de Citreria, Antoine de Montlevin, Guillaume Droin, and other schoolmasters with not a little amusement, although their troubles often resemble those of teachers of a much later day. The career of Hubert Susanné as described is particularly amusing. Although time and again Hubert is strongly urged to send in his resignation, he fights for his rights to the very

last. His career reads somewhat like a chapter out of the life of Richard Bentley. Incidentally one gets some insight into the state of classical studies in a large school in France at this period. Virgil, of course, holds a prominent place, but a knowledge of Greek is still rare among schoolmasters.

The *Bulletin of the First District Normal School* at Kirksville, Missouri, for April, 1915, was devoted to a discussion of various phases of Latin study. Professor J. B. Game, of Tulane University, writes on "The Qualifications of a High School Teacher of Latin." Professor Gentry discusses "Latin as a Vocational Study." To the "Symposium on the Value of a Knowledge of Latin," contributions are made by W. A. Clark, A. L. Phillips, E. M. Violette, W. H. Zeigel, and J. S. Stokes. Merritt Starr and H. B. Hutchins contribute to "Excerpts from What Lawyers Have Said concerning the Value to the Lawyer of Training in the Classics." From Drs. Victor Vaughn and B. G. DeNancrede are drawn "Excerpts from What Physicians Have Said about the Value to the Student of Medicine of Training in the Ancient Classics." B. P. Gentry writes on "Imagination in Education." "Caesar and the Great War" is by T. Jennie Green, who writes also on "Illustrative Material" and "Latin in the Grades."

Some time ago Mrs. John Boyd Thacher placed in the Library of Congress the large collection of early printed books that had been brought together by her husband. This collection is now made more accessible to students by the publication of a *Catalogue of the John Boyd Thacher Collection of Incunabula*. The book has been compiled by F. W. Ashley, chief of the Order Department, and issued by the Government Printing Office. Unlike the annual packages of government seed which come to us duly franked, gratis, and without the asking, this book comes only with the asking, and that, too, when the request is accompanied by the modest sum of one dollar and fifty cents. However, it has been widely distributed among higher institutions of learning and colleges of agriculture as well. (This last is possibly intended to offset the seed that comes regularly to the scholar's door.) Some 800 volumes are described, emanating from 500 different presses; and it is rather remarkable to note that the first book of these incunabula, as well as the one to round out the five hundredth press, Mr. Thacher found in America. For the continuous history of early printing unusual facilities are here offered the student. There is a fair sprinkling of classical authors in the restricted sense, Latin faring much better than Greek in this respect. Thus one fails to find the Florentine Homer of 1488, the Aldine Aristophanes of 1498, and some other volumes dear to the heart of the Grecian.

In *El Nacimiento de Dionisos*, published this year in New York, we have an interesting attempt to imitate an ancient Greek tragedy in a modern

Romance tongue. The author, Señor Pedro Henriquez Ureña, is a native of Santo Domingo, and he displays close familiarity with Greek drama and mythology. He has tried to reproduce that form of tragedy which immediately preceded Aeschylus. The chorus is predominant, and in each episode a single actor is introduced. He has woven into his play all the familiar parts of the later drama—prologue, parodos, episode, stasimon, exodos, and commos. Perhaps the most striking thing about this attempt is the use of prose throughout. “Debese a la dificultad de emplear metros castellanos qui sugieran las formas poéticas de los griegos,” says the author. However, this will not be a satisfactory excuse, in the opinion of most, for one who sets out to reproduce the form of a Greek tragedy. Greek tragedy is nothing if not poetical, and poetry is a matter of form no less than of content. Prose may satisfy one who is forced to resort to translation for his knowledge of classical poetry, but, as was long ago pointed out by Matthew Arnold, the only person capable of passing criticism upon the translation will be the professed classicist. Arnold’s own *Merope* is a very successful attempt at reproducing the spirit of a Greek play in modern speech, and it is needless to say that the verse is not the least successful part of his experiment.

In spite of a certain famous definition of a university as being a place where nothing useful is taught, the fact is that universities have always been eminently practical places. True learning and culture have not always in times past found congenial homes within cloistered retreats. Anyone with the slightest knowledge of the history of scholarship will remember how slowly the humanists forced their way into the mediaeval universities. At that time the universities were practical in their aim and had as their object the preparing of leaders in the church. True scholarship with its earnest search for truth met with scant encouragement in college communities. Mark the trials of Dolet, Stephanus, and above all Reuchlin at the hands of university authorities. Full enlightenment on the condition of the mediaeval universities may be gained from the perusal of the *Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum*, which has been correctly called “the first modern satire.” There is no more lamentable error than the common confusion of scholasticism and humanism even among classical students themselves. One of the greatest scholars of modern times, Bentley, because of his high ideals of the scholar’s life was persecuted by his opponents in his own college and during the forty years of his mastership of Trinity College his time was largely consumed in defending himself against his enemies. Only between rounds, as it were, was he able to snatch a little time for throwing off those works which have won him immortality. His tenacity of purpose and his readiness to defend the cause of learning by force, if need be, might well be imitated by all true lovers of learning at the present time. “If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?”

The finest general working library recently broken up by sale is certainly that of Auguste Julius Clemens Herbert, Baron De Reuter, late president of Reuter's Telegram Co., Ltd. This remarkable collection of books has passed into the possession of Henry Sotheran, the London bookseller, and by him is being dispersed at very reasonable prices. For a private reference library the books cover an extraordinarily wide range of subjects, and they are in very fine condition. Many of the dictionaries, which embrace numerous languages, are handsomely bound in morocco, t.e.g., and evidently books that would be in constant use were brought together by a man who delighted to work with beautiful tools. Many of the most common reference books are bound in that most durable of modern bindings, buckram, and always in fine taste. Many of the volumes will make a strong appeal to the classical student; and the Sanskritist and comparative philologist will here find books not easily picked up elsewhere. Anyone with a strong inclination, reasonably backed up by pounds, shillings, or pence, may procure much that will delight both eye and mind. Five parts of the catalogue have been issued as follows: I. Art and Archaeology, Cyclopedias and Dictionaries; II. Atlases and History; III. Philosophy, Orientalia, and Classical Literature; IV. European Literature and Philology, Natural History and Geography; V. Medicine, Law, Music, and Theology; VI. Mathematics, Astronomy, and Physics. This library forms a fitting pendant to that of the late Professor Atkinson, of Dublin, which came into Sotheran's hands last year. This last was the remarkable collection of a specialist, and the volumes almost without exception were, if it be not a breach of international etiquette to apply such phrases at the present time to a British collection, *streng philologisch* and *stark gebraucht*.

At the opening of the Bodley Shakespeare Exhibition held in Oxford last April, Sir William Osler spoke on "Creators, Transmuters, and Transmitters," taking Shakespeare, Francis Bacon, and Robert Burton as representatives of each class respectively. The deep insight of the poet is contrasted with vain attempts at scientific classification. "From Galen to Laurentius, physicians have haggled over the divisions of the ages of man, but with a grand disregard of their teaching. Shakespeare so settles the question that the stages are stereotyped in our minds. We can only think of certain aspects in terms of his description." The very close connection between the science of the present and that of the past is stoutly maintained. "The raw ore of Leucippus and Democritus has been refined to radium by Crookes, Ramsay, and the Curies; the foundations of Krupp are laid in the *De Re Metallica* of Agricola; the defenders of Verdun use the expanded formulae of Archimedes and Apollonius; Lamarck and Darwin, Wallace and Mendel are only Anaximander, Empedocles, and Lucretius writ large; poppy, mandragora, and other drowsy syrups had been in use for centuries to make persons insensible to pain, but the great transmutation did not take place until October 16, 1846, when Morton demon-

strated at the Massachusetts Hospital the practicability of aether anaesthesia, Pasteur, Koch, and Lister are Varro, Fracastorius, and Spallanzini in nineteenth-century garb." "Without Aristotle, Galen, and Fabricius there would have been no Harvey. Transforming their raw ores by methods all his own, he made the *De Motu Cordis*, 1628, a new creation in the world of science." In conclusion, commenting upon the fact that Shakespeare is so frequently quoted by the modern world, he reminds his hearers that Homer held the same position among the ancient Greeks, as can be gathered from Plutarch and Lucian.

The *Educational Review* for September contains an article by Miss Virginia Gildersleeve of Barnard College on "The Purpose of College Greek." As for Greek, Dean Gildersleeve admits that she has "never found it to be of any direct practical and professional use" and that she has forgotten how to read the language; nevertheless she is grateful for the college requirements that compelled her to its study. She thinks that the college course should communicate the joy of beauty and the exhilaration of adventure in much the same manner as they are conveyed to the spirit by actual travel and journeys across the seas to civilizations older and in some ways richer than our own. She does not think that too much stress should be laid upon the disciplinary or linguistic side of the instruction, but that students should be hurried over the preliminaries, and rapidity of reading should be aimed at. The romance of archaeology should be introduced to the student very early. The point is made that young people are always thrilled with exciting stories about the search for hidden treasure, yet so few are familiar with the romantic life of Schliemann. Greek being remote to most people can give "historic perspective, a realization that things develop very slowly, with long lapses and backslidings, that we must not be too impatient of delays nor too much carried away by the latest social nostrums and cure-alls. . . . Then this prying into ancient thought gives rise to respectful toleration for unessential differences and is thus in its effect much like foreign travel and residence in distant lands. Without it we are in danger of becoming provincial and narrow." Then, too, just as one can get more out of his travel if he is familiar with the language of the country, so a knowledge of an original language has infinite advantage over a translation in the case of literature. As for the frequent charge that students forget Greek, she replies: "Not for much gold would I give up the memory of a happy journey. . . . Because I cannot travel there again, shall I therefore regret that I was once privileged to live in Arcady?"

In the *American Political Science Review* for February, 1916, Professor Carl Darling Buck of The University of Chicago writes on "Language and the Sentiment of Nationality." He discusses the revival of the feeling of nationality among many contemporary small peoples. As for the attitude of large

nations toward their language, Professor Hans Delbrück is quoted as saying that "colonial policy must be dictated not merely by commercial but rather by national interests. The first proviso for a colony which aspires to be an assistance to Germany is the absolute supremacy of the German language." The important distinction is drawn between nation and nationality. "The ancient Greeks in the period of their highest development were a nationality, but not a nation in the political sense, likewise the Germans in the time of Goethe." It is well pointed out that the descent of few families is a matter of record and it is the common linguistic inheritance that is usually felt to be the real evidence of national descent. Language is "the one conspicuous banner of nationality, to be defended against encroachment, as it is the first object of attack on the part of a power aiming to crush out a distinction of nationality among its subject peoples." Latin spread uniformly with the spread of the political power of Rome. A knowledge of Latin was the first requisite for attaining a mark in the Roman world. Etruscan, Celtic, even closely allied dialects had to give way before the speech of the stronger political people. An interesting exception to this overwhelming predominance of Latin language in the Roman world was the persistence of Greek in the East. The educated Roman looked upon Greek with great respect. Cicero is quoted as saying that Greek was read among "almost all peoples," whereas Latin was confined within "its own rather narrow boundaries." Greek towns often used their own tongue in their communications with Rome. Public proclamations often were issued in both Greek and Latin. However, the Romans realized the importance of their language and they did not approve of the speaking of Greek in the senate. Cicero incurred censure because he addressed the Syracusans in Greek, and in the East where the officials were familiar with Greek, addresses were given in Latin as the official tongue. On the other hand, the maintenance of the Greek language in Greece has been an important factor in conserving the feeling of Greek nationality down to our own time. Much of the article is devoted to the smaller countries which have had an active part in the present war, and by clear and concise distinctions, guidance is furnished through what to many may seem a confused welter of kindred peoples and tongues.